REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4, 8-9, 12, 16-17 and 19 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 9, 17 and 19 are amended by the present amendment. Support for the amended claims can be found at least at original Claims 2 and 10. No new matter is presented.

In the Final Office Action of July 21, 2008 (herein, the Final Office Action), the specification is objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(d)(1); Claims 9-10, 12, 16-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101; and Claims 1-2, 4, 8-10, 12, 16-17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Ohsaki et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,985,938, herein Ohsaki).

Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the specification, and the rejection of Claims 9-10, 12, 16-17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 101, be withdrawn in view of the amendment filed October 21, 2008. The Advisory Action of October 30, 2008 (herein, the Advisory Action) indicates that this amendment was entered, but failed to address the objection to the specification, and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

The Final Office Action rejects Claims 1-2, 4, 8-10, 12, 16-17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Ohsaki. In response to this rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 19 recite novel features not disclosed by Ohsaki.

Independent Claim 1, for example, recites, in part, a system management method for associating at least a process object and at least a process that should be executed for each process object with each node in a tree structure, and operating each node based on the tree structure so as to manage the process object and the process, comprising:

> ... a node setting step of providing a general node corresponding to the
> process object and a function node that is a program for performing a process,
> setting the function node as a child node of the general node corresponding to
> the process object for which the process corresponding to the function node

should be performed, and setting the general node as a parent node of the
function node...

setting, for each general node, ***non-registered user operation authority that is
operation authority of a non-registered user*** and ***storing the non-registered user
operation authority in the storing means by associating the non-registered user
operation authority with the general node***; and

***causing the function node to execute the process only when the
process is permitted by the non-registered user operation authority set for
the general node*** that is the parent node of the function node, ***when execution
of the process corresponding to the function node is requested by the non-
registered user.***

Independent Claims 9, 17 and 19, while directed to alternative embodiments, are

amended to recite similar features. Accordingly, the remarks and arguments presented below

are applicable to each of independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 19.

Turning to the applied reference, Ohsaki describes a workflow system for a paperless

office that includes a manipulating computer terminal for executing a workflow between

persons in charge, a computer terminal for designing the workflow by designating project

variables for multiplexing a plurality of paths for nodes, each indicating a unit of operation to

be handled, and a workflow server for managing the designed workflow and accessing the

manipulating computer terminals in accordance with activities that indicate operations

assigned to the nodes.[1]

Ohsaki, however, fails to disclose the features directed to setting and controlling non-

registered user operation, as required by amended independent Claim 1. As noted above,

Claim 1 is amended to recite the features of dependent Claim 2, as recommended in the

Advisory Action.

In rejecting Claim 2, the Office Action relies on col. 9, ll. 51-58 and col. 6, ll. 42-49

of Ohsaki. More particularly, in rejecting the "setting" feature, the Office Action relies on

col. 9, ll. 51-58 of Ohsaki, which describes when a new user attempts to log on the system by

using the manipulating computer terminal 20, the user management program 34 checks an ID

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[1] Ohsaki, Abstract.

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and a password entered by the user. The user information storage 39 retains information such as organizations which users belong to, hierarchical structures of the organizations, relationships between the users and their superiors, and the range of the authorities of the users.

Thus, this cited portion merely describes the process of authenticating a user based on an entered ID and password. In order for the user to gain access to the system, therefore, the user must be a registered user with a corresponding ID and password. Ohsaki further indicates that these users are registered by noting that various information is stored for each user. Accordingly, this cited portion is not related to setting an operation authority for non-registered users, and fails to disclose "setting, for each general node, *non-registered user operation authority that is operation authority of a non-registered user* and *storing the non-registered user operation authority in the storing means by associating the non-registered user operation authority with the general node*" as recited in amended independent Claim 1.

In rejecting the claimed feature directed to "causing the function node to execute the process only when the process is permitted by the non-registered user", the Office Action relies on col. 6, ll. 42-49 of Ohsaki. This cited portion of Ohsaki describes that "A node for referring to project type data generates and executes child processes as an activity of the node by using a definition of a project referred to by the node. Also to generate and execute child processes using the same project "bumon", the node can circulate data to different users (or departments) by separately setting IDs of the child processes, that is, the name data thereof."

This cited portion of Ohsaki, therefore, merely describes that a node is capable of generating and executing child processes that are circulated to different users, but fails to disclose that this operation is, in any way, related to a non-registered user. Therefore, Ohsaki also fails to disclose *"causing the function node to execute the process only when the*
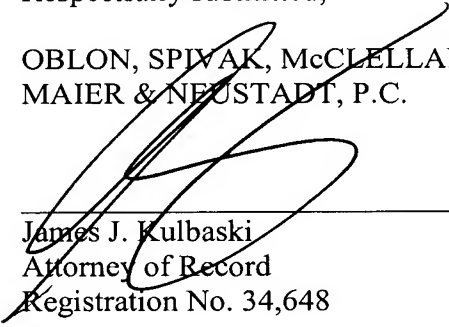
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process is permitted by the non-registered user operation authority set for the general node
that is the parent node of the function node, *when execution of the process corresponding to*
the function node is requested by the non-registered user" as recited in amended
independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully that the
rejection of Claim 1 (and the claims which depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be
withdrawn. For substantially similar reasons, it is also submitted that independent Claim 9
(and the claims which depend therefrom) and Claims 17 and 19 patentably define over
Ohsaki.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing
comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1, 4, 8-9, 12, 16-
17 and 19 is patentably distinguishing over the applied references. The present application is
therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable
reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

James J. Kulbaski
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 34,648

Andrew T. Harry
Registration No. 56,959

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)

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